



The Situation in Rhodesia

Statement issued by the Executive Committee of the African National Congress of South Africa

THE AFRICAN NATIONAL CONGRESS of South Africa views with deep concern and indignation the extremely grave implications to the people of Zimbabwe, of Southern Africa, the independent states of Africa and indeed the whole anti-racialist and anti-fascist forces of the world caused by the situation which is now prevailing in Rhodesia.

In the past the African National Congress has warned the world over and over again that white domination and fascism persists and is planning to entrench itself in Zimbabwe no less than it has done in South Africa, Mozambique, and South West Africa. We have often posed the question, what makes it possible that in a world in which the overwhelming majority of the people are opposed to racialism and colonialism such a situation could continue to exist in Southern Africa. We have suggested that it would be important to examine those who are shielding this obnoxious system from its complete destruction.

It was and still is our view that the policies and practices of those who benefit materially from the exploitation and oppression of the African people in Southern Africa constitute a barricade against the freedom of the African people.

We do not think that it is necessary for us to go into lengthy details to support our views because these have already been submitted to *The Special Committee on the situation with regard to Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples*, in the form of a Petition submitted in Dar-es-Salaam on June 9th, 1965. The Honourable

Committee in its report reproduced our Petition *in extenso* and it now forms part of the documents of the United Nations Organization.

Unholy Alliance

Apart from that Petition, in numerous speeches and declarations we have warned of the grave dangers which might face both the peoples of Southern Africa, of Africa and indeed the whole world unless this sinister Unholy Alliance between Verwoerd, Salazar, and Smith was smashed.

In this statement we merely want to emphasize a few points which we have made before about this Unholy Alliance. We have alleged and still allege that the Unholy Alliance of Verwoerd, Smith and Salazar was fundamentally based on a common ideology—racialism and fascism; a common economic objective—the ruthless exploitation and oppression of the African people; a common military design—the defence of colonialism, fascism, white domination and the subversion of the independent states.

This white minority fascist triumvirate in Southern Africa is a bulwark and bastion of colonialism and imperialism in Africa and a springboard from which the imperialist powers are plotting to reverse all that the African Revolution has gained.

It is an irony that only twenty-three years have elapsed since the sons and daughters of Britain, France, Belgium, Asia and Africa were called upon to rally and to give their lives in the most unprecedented war and loss of life to destroy the menacing and powerful fascist regime of Hitler and Mussolini in Europe. Today, some of these very powers are either assisting openly or clandestinely, conniving or directly supporting the very growth of a similar fascist regime in Southern Africa. It is legitimate to ask whether these white powers do so today because Hitler's Aryanism was against one white group as against another, and whether their indifference today is because it is white racialism against the black people. Or is it because economic benefits from the exploitation of the African takes first place to the morality, justice and human rights in the whole consortium of the Western Imperialist Powers, who have a stake in the maintenance of the bastion of imperialism and exploitation in Southern Africa?

Western Powers

It is our view that the main criminals who must be put in the dock in the present situation in Southern Africa are the main pillars of colonialism and fascism in Southern Africa. We have alleged before

that there is in fact a more powerful and unholy alliance whose members are primarily Britain, the United States of America, France, Belgium and Japan. It is these powers who have a huge share and stake in the continued oppression and exploitation of the people. It is these very powers who continue to give an extended lease of life to a wicked system which has been so vehemently condemned by the peoples of the world. Their black record of sabotaging all efforts made to end Dr. Verwoerd's apartheid in South Africa and South West Africa ; Salazar's fascism in Mozambique and Angola ; and Smith's arrogant usurpation of power and the continued oppression of the people of Rhodesia must and will remain an eternal indictment against them.

Britain's own acts before, during and after Smith's Declaration of Independence constitute an act of treachery which the African people and all other right-thinking people will never forget.

It is indeed not the first time that the British Government has betrayed the rights of the African people in the interests of a white minority and also in the interests of her economic stake in the country. The situation of the African people in South Africa today is a classical example of British betrayal. The people of Zimbabwe in many respects are beginning to suffer what the South African African people have been suffering for over fifty years.

For very many years now Britain has been claiming that the United Nations Organization had no jurisdiction whatsoever over the situation in Rhodesia. And that Rhodesia was the sole responsibility of the British Government which was competent and able to solve the situation. It might be recalled that over several years when the South African situation was also raised in the United Nations, Britain also emphatically excluded the jurisdiction of the United Nations over that issue claiming that it was purely a domestic issue.

Sanctions

For a number of years too, the African people of South Africa demanded that if a very serious blood bath had to be avoided in South Africa the world should impose economic and diplomatic sanctions on South Africa. One of the greatest opponents to this suggestion and as far as we know up to date was the British Government itself.

It is the height of duplicity having regard to the foregoing attitude of Britain in the past that she should now be the first to appeal to the Security Council for assistance in the European situa-

tion, and not only that but to appeal for sanctions which she has for years denounced as ineffectual.

It is our view that if the Security Council and the General Assembly of the United Nations Organization agree to enforce sanctions against Rhodesia, a member of the Unholy Alliance, this today can be effective only if it is applied to the other members of this Unholy Alliance, Portugal and South Africa, who are guilty of the same crimes against both the Declaration of Human Rights and the Charter of the United Nations. Any other decision would be impotent and farcical and would merely permit Britain which has such a large stake in the economy of South Africa and Rhodesia to continue to reap economic benefits.

We, however, have never believed that economic sanctions alone can bring the white racialists and fascists to their knees. They rule and intend to rule the majority of the people with the baton and the gun; to crush them they must be ruined economically and defeated militarily.

The fact that Britain has not seen fit to intervene militarily in the Rhodesian situation remains a complete mystery to those who know how ruthlessly the British Government has dealt with mutiny, rebellion and treachery in any other colony. It is needless to cite examples which have already been referred to like Malaya, Aden, Cyprus, etc., etc. One can only presume that where British interests can be protected by a white minority government, they are even prepared to swallow rebellion and to leave the Governor-General, the Representative of the Crown, unprotected.

Unless the boundaries of white racialism and fascism are to extend, the grave situation which exists today requires the mighty and concerted efforts of the people of Southern Africa, the people of Africa and indeed the whole world. The time to act is NOW, tomorrow may be too late.

D. NOKWE,

SECRETARY-GENERAL.

Communists and the Truth by Govan Mbeki

GOVAN MBEKI, MEMBER of the South African Communist Party and of the African National Congress, was brought from his cell at Robben Island where he is serving a life sentence as one of the 'Rivonia' trialists, to appear in a Durban courtroom last November. He was a

defence witness at the trial of Harold Strachan, former political prisoner, whose revelations of abominable jail conditions caused a furore. Strachan is now being prosecuted for causing 'false information' about jail conditions to be published in the *Rand Daily Mail*. The prosecutor, Combrink tried to shake Mbeki's evidence by suggesting that he had no regard for the truth. Govan Mbeki's evidence—the whole of which was an inspiring example of a revolutionary of unbroken spirit—was more than a match for Combrink. We reprint some brief extracts of the cross-examination.

Combrink: For several years before it was banned you were a local editor of the newspaper *New Age*? Mbeki: *Yes.*

You are aware of the power and extent of a press report?—*Yes.*

If you had the opportunity of publishing half truths to serve your political ends would you have done so?—*I would never have published untruths.*

Would you have tested every bit of information for truth?—*I would have.*

Are you saying that everything published under your supervision was the truth?—*As far as I am aware.*

You, who would not shirk bloodshed to attain your political ends, would not print a half truth or lie in your newspaper?—*I wouldn't print an untruth. There is no relation between telling a lie and bloodshed. Men who conduct wars do not do so because they have abandoned the principle of truth.*

Then you would rather kill a man than lie to him?—*If the killing is in the process of conducting a war.*

And a lie in the process of conducting a war?—*It is necessary to kill sometimes to weaken the enemy. A lie can boomerang. If it is discovered you would lose the support of your people. There is nothing to be gained from telling lies.*

Do you still feel as ardently about your political beliefs as before you were jailed?—*Yes.*

You say you are prepared to sacrifice human life to achieve political ends, but for the sake of the truth you are prepared to see your friends suffer in prison? *They are suffering in prison now for the truth.*